

couplet, ours is the one which clarifies and sharpens its antithetical structure the best, and which is truest to the “ups” and “downs” of romantic experience.³⁸

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WAS AUGUSTUS A VISITOR AT THE PANATHENAIA?

In two separate articles that, however, are identical as to the point discussed here, M. Hoff has recently claimed that Augustus visited Athens in 12 B.C. and that he participated in the Panathenaic festival.¹ He adduces as evidence Cassius Dio 54. 28. 3. Dio reports there that when Augustus received word of Agrippa's serious illness, he immediately left where he happened to be and hastened to see him, but arrived in Campania only after Agrippa's death. According to Hoff, he left from Athens, because Dio says of him: ἔτυχε δὲ ἐν τοῖς Παναθηναίοις ὄπλο-μαχίας ἀγῶνας τῶν παίδων ὀνόματι τιθεῖς. The wording, in fact, implies more than a spectator's role: it makes Augustus sponsor of gladiatorial contests at the Panathenaia in the names of his (adopted) sons.

All of this seems very odd. First of all, gladiatorial combats were never part of the Panathenaia. The idea that Augustus could have introduced them and sponsored them in the name of his adopted sons is hardly tenable: what could have been the purpose with regard to Athenian spectators? Furthermore, the Panathenaia of 12 B.C. would have been the lesser, annual event, since the greater Panathenaia only occurred every third year of the Olympiad. Those had been celebrated in 14 B.C. and would again be held in 10 B.C. It would be rather surprising to see Augustus involve himself in the minor event. Be that as it may, Hoff's thesis collapses before the fact that the Panathenaia, the greater as well as the lesser, were held in mid-summer, whereas Agrippa died in March.

It has long been known that the Panathenaia took place during the last decade of Hekatombaion, the first month of the Athenian year that began in July, and that their principal day was Hekatombaion 28.² The larger, penteteric festival may have lasted from Hekatombaion 23 to 30, whereas the annual event, occurring during

1. “Civil Disobedience and Unrest in Augustan Athens,” *Hesperia* 58 (1989): 267–76, esp. p. 275; “The Early History of the Roman Agora at Athens,” in *The Greek Renaissance in the Roman Empire*, ed. S. Walker and A. Cameron (London, 1989), p. 5: “Augustus' final recorded visit occurred in 12 B.C. when the emperor was attending the Panathenaic festival. Dio reports that while Augustus was in Athens Agrippa fell ill in Rome and died before Augustus was able to return to Italy” (same text in *Hesperia* article, except that there the words “in Rome” are missing and “he” stands for “and”).

2. A. Mommsen, *Feste der Stadt Athen im Altertum* (Leipzig, 1898), p. 52. The basic testimonies are Proc. in *Ti.* 9B: τὰ γὰρ μεγάλα (Παναθήναια) τοῦ Ἑκατομβαιῶνος γίνετο τρίτῃ ἀπιόντος, and schol. on Pl. *Resp.* 327A: καὶ ταῦτα (τὰ μεγάλα Παναθήναια) μὲν ἦγον εἰς ἄστυ Ἑ[κα]τομβαιῶνος μηνὸς τρίτῃ ἀπιόντος. See J. D. Mikalson, *The Sacred and Civic Calendar of the Athenian Year* (Princeton, 1975), pp. 33–34.

the same month, was certainly of shorter duration.³ These dates cannot be reconciled with what is known about the time of Agrippa's death.

Dio says that Agrippa, just recently invested once again with *tribunicia potestas* and an *imperium (maius)*, set out for unruly Pannonia, although the winter during which Marcus Valerius and Publius Sulpicius took office as consuls (on 1 January 12 B.C.) was already at hand. Upon his arrival, the Pannonians, terrified by his presence, resumed peaceful conduct. Agrippa then returned, but fell ill in Campania. He died soon thereafter; this must have occurred, in any event, long before the summer, that is, long before the Panathenaia.

It seems obvious, therefore, that Hoff erred in interpreting Dio's words. Their actual meaning is not difficult to find; any substantial history of Augustus or Agrippa, or of Roman religion, will do. Augustus was in fact in Italy at the time of Agrippa's death. On 6 March 12 B.C. he was elected *pontifex maximus*, as Ovid and several calendars attest;⁴ see, for instance, the *Fasti Maffeiiani*: "hoc die Caesar pontifex maximus factus est."⁵ The year is preserved by the *Fasti Praenestini*: "[Quir]inio et Valgio coss."⁶ Soon after, from March 19 to 23, Augustus conducted in Rome the festival of *Quinquatrus*, originally a festival in honor of Mars, but which coincided with the festival commemorating the foundation of Minerva's temple on the Aventine. For that reason, it had long come to be considered Minerva's festival.⁷ Gladiatorial contests are otherwise attested for it.⁸

Since Minerva is the Roman name for the Greek goddess Athena, it looks as if Dio, by way of *interpretatio Graeca*, has styled the Roman festival for Minerva *Panathenaia*, the festival in honor of Athena. This is, in fact, corroborated by another passage of his. He says that the emperor Domitian venerated "Athena" above all other gods and celebrated for her the *Panathenaia* with special pomp: he staged annually at the Alban mountain contests of poets, writers, and gladiators.⁹ The same festival, with an almost identical description of its events, is called by Suetonius *Quinquatria Minervae*, and included "venationes et scaenicos ludos superque oratorum ac poetarum certamina."¹⁰

Dio's *Panathenaia*, then, are the Roman *Quinquatrus*.¹¹ Augustus received word of Agrippa's fatal illness while he celebrated them, between 20 and 23 March

3. Mikalson, *Sacred and Civic Calendar*, p. 34. A thorough discussion of all the sources can be found in Mommsen, *Feste*, pp. 47–61. See also L. Deubner, *Attische Feste* (Berlin, 1932), p. 23.

4. *Fasti* 3. 419–20 (on 6 March): "Caesaris innumeris, quos maluit ille mereri, / accessit titulus pontificalis honor."

5. *CIL* I² p. 223 (on 6 March): "hoc die Caesar pontif. maxim. fact. est."

6. *CIL* I² p. 233. All the testimonies are conveniently collected by Th. Mommsen, *CIL* I² p. 311, and by V. Ehrenberg and A. H. M. Jones, *Documents Illustrating the Reigns of Augustus and Tiberius*² (Oxford, 1955), p. 47.

7. G. Wissowa, *Religion und Kultus der Römer*² (Munich, 1912), p. 253; W. W. Fowler, *The Roman Festivals of the Period of the Republic* (London, 1916), pp. 57–62; K. Latte, *Römische Religionsgeschichte* (Munich, 1960), p. 164.

8. Ov. *Fasti* 3. 809–14; see O. Hentschel, "Quinquatrus," *RE* 24 (1963): 1159; G. Ville, *La gladiature en Occident des origines à la mort de Domitien* (Rome, 1981), p. 102.

9. 67. 1. 2 καὶ διὰ τοῦτο καὶ τὰ Παναθηναία μεγάλως ἐώρταζε καὶ ἐν αὐτοῖς ἀγῶνας καὶ ποιητῶν καὶ λογογράφων μονομάχων τε καὶ κατ' ἔτος ὡς εἰπεῖν ἐν τῷ Ἀλβανῷ ἐποίει.

10. *Dom.* 4. 4.

11. See D. Magie, *De Romanorum Iuris Publici Sacrique Vocabulis Sollemnibus in Graecum Sermonem Conversis* (Leipzig, 1905), p. 23: "Παναθηναία = Quinquatrus apud scriptores et in glossariis"; and p. 152, with numerous testimonies. Historians who recognized the identification include V. Gardthausen, *Augustus und seine Zeit* (Leipzig, 1896; repr. Aalen, 1964), vol. 1, p. 860; J.-M. Roddaz, *Marcus Agrippa* (Paris, 1984), p. 485.

12 B.C. He is again firmly attested in Rome on 28 April 12 B.C.¹² Previous scholarship, after all, was right in claiming that Augustus' last visit to Athens was the one of 19 B.C.¹³

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12. Ehrenberg and Jones, *Documents*, p. 48; D. Kienast, *Römische Kaisertabelle* (Darmstadt, 1990), p. 64.

13. See, e.g., H. Halfmann, *Itinera Principum* (Stuttgart, 1986), p. 158. Without being aware of it, Hoff has predecessors. E. Cary rendered the crucial passage of Dio as follows (*Dio's Roman History* [London and New York, 1917], vol. 6, p. 357): "Augustus happened to be exhibiting, in the name of his sons, contests of armed warriors at the Panathenaia," and added the note "in Athens." Likewise, T. Rice Holmes, *The Architect of the Roman Empire* (Oxford, 1931), vol. 2, p. 72, concluded from Dio that Augustus had visited Athens in 12 B.C. His error was noticed by M. Reinhold, *Marcus Agrippa* (New York, 1933), p. 126, n. 12.